



Ernie and Helen celebrate sixty-one years of the “Love that Wouldn’t Last”

For the past eleven years, Aruba has been the place where Ernie and Helen Montrond of Taunton, Massachusetts celebrate their anniversary. This year they dined at the Red Parrot at the Divi Mega All Inclusive Resort for their sixty-first anniversary of a marriage they confess, “All our families and friends declared, “wouldn’t even last a year.”

Ernie & Helen met when she came to work at the Winthrop-Atkins company, where Ernie had already been employed for eleven years. They developed a friendship that lasted through the Second World War via continuing correspondence, then Ernie returned from Naval Service the day after Christmas, 1946, and they were married three weeks later.

“It was quite the talk at Winthrop-Atkins,” revealed Ernie, “we certainly didn’t waste any time.” Helen elaborates; “I am Greek and Ernie is Portuguese, and in those times, it was quite unheard of for two such different backgrounds to marry; we certainly raised some eyebrows. Everyone thought it would never last, but here we are sixty-one years later, still going strong.”

The years blessed them with a daughter that followed Ernie into the service, doing a five-year stint with the U.S. Air Force. Ernie is still very active with the American Legion and served as State Commander for Massachusetts for the year 1973-74.

Ernie & Helen choose Aruba every year to celebrate their love since a one-day stop during a cruise eleven years ago, given them by Winthrop-Atkins for Ernie’s fifty years of service. Since they discovered Aruba and the Divi Resort, it has been their annual vacation destination. “That was it for us,” declares Ernie, “we have never cared to go anywhere else. Here at the Divi they make such a fuss when we arrive each year, it is like we are royalty. Everyone knows our name and they treat us so well, we feel as if we are with family. We wouldn’t have it any other way.” They especially noted the efforts of Francis Ridderstaat in making sure their stay is special, and even Resort Assistant Manager Yee Ting Held stopped by to make sure that everything was perfect for their anniversary dinner and to offer congratulations.

Last year, the Aruban Government honored Ernie and Helen as Distinguished Visitors. THE NEWS wishes them many more years of “going strong” and along with the Divi staff, looks forward to seeing them declared “Ambassadors of Goodwill”!